

## PATENT

3 monitoring a request signal from a first device for data on a second device in the network,  
4 the request signal including a user identification parameter;  
5 determining whether the access to the data requires a credit value;  
6 determining whether a user identified by the user identification parameter is permitted  
7 access to the data;  
8 detecting a pre-set credit parameter in the request signal; and  
9 comparing the pre-set credit parameter with a pre-determined value to determine  
10 permission to access the data.

1 30. A method of controlling access of claim 29, further comprising providing access  
2 to the data in response to the user having permission to access the data and the pre-set credit  
3 parameter being greater than or equal to a predetermined value.

1 31. A method of controlling access of claim 29, further comprising preventing access  
2 to the second device in response to the pre-set credit parameter being less than or equal to a  
3 predetermined value.

1 32. The method of claim 29, further comprising re-directing the data signal to a third  
2 device in response to the pre-set credit parameter being less than a predetermined value, the third  
3 device allowing for a re-setting of the pre-set credit parameter to a new pre-set credit value  
4 comprising a value greater than or equal to the predetermined value.

1 33. The method of claim 29, wherein the predetermined value is one from a group  
2 comprising a positive monetary value, a positive time value, a bandwidth value, a quality of  
3 service value, and a content rating.

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1       34. The method of claim 33, further comprising allowing access to one from a group  
2       comprised of voice data, video data, and a real-time application in response to at least one of the  
3       bandwidth value or quality of service value being greater than or equal to a threshold value.

1       35. The method of claim 29, further comprising providing access to a second data that  
2       does not require a credit value in response to one of the pre-set credit value being less than or  
3       equal to the pre-determined value or the user not having permission to access the data  
4       corresponding to the request signal.

1       36. A network-based billing method for providing access to resources on a network,  
2       the method comprising:

3               monitoring a data signal from a device on a network, the data signal including a request  
4       for a resource, the resource including a value parameter;  
5               identifying a cost for accessing the resource;  
6               associating a user identification with the data signal;  
7               identifying a credit balance for the user identification; and  
8               comparing the credit balance with the cost to determine access to the resource; and

1       37. The network-based billing method of claim 36, further comprising allowing  
2       access to the resource in response to the credit balance being less than or equal to the cost  
3       preventing access to the resource.

1       38. The network-based billing method of claim 36, further comprising allowing  
2       access to the resource in response to the credit balance being greater than or equal to the cost  
3       preventing access to the resource.

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1        39. The method of claim 36, further comprising re-directing the data signal to a  
2        second resource in response to the credit balance being less than the cost, the second resource  
3        configured to allow for increasing the credit balance.

1        40. The method of claim 36, further comprising providing access to a second resource  
2        having no cost in response to the credit balance being less than the cost.

1        41. The method of claim 36, wherein the cost comprises one from a group comprising  
2        a monetary value, a quality of service value, a bandwidth value, a time value, and a content rating  
3        value.

1        42. The method of claim 36, further comprising passing the data signal to a second  
2        device having the resource.